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APPLICATION NO	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO
09 623,714	09 07 2000	Hakan Appelquist	09546-011001	6188

262:1 7590 04 14 2003

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EXAMINER

COOLEY, CHARLES E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1723

DATE MAILED: 04 14 2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/623,714

Applicant(s)

Appelquist et al.

Examiner

Charles Cooley

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 1 Feb 2002

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.

2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above, claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.

11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.

12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_

3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

## Attachment(s)

15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO 892)

18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO 413) (Paper No.)

16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO 948)

19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO 152)

17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (PTO 1449) (Paper No.)

20) ☐ Other

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## OFFICE ACTION

1. This application remains assigned to Technology Center 1700, Art Unit 1723 and the following will apply for this application:

**a. Please direct all written correspondence with the correct application serial number for this application to Art Unit 1723.**

**b.** Telephone inquiries regarding this application should be directed to the Technology Center 1700 receptionist at ☎(703) 308-0651 or to the Examiner at ☎(703) 308-0112. Official facsimile correspondence filed before a final office action should be transmitted to ☎(703) 872-9310. Official facsimile correspondence which responds to a final office action should be transmitted to ☎(703) 872-9311.

**c.** Inquiries regarding application status, matching responses with applications, patent term questions, locating and retrieval of applications, incomplete office actions, requests for copies of office actions and/or references, requests to remail office actions, small/large entity status, or other administrative inquiries should be directed to the **Technology Center 1700 Customer Service Center** at ☎(703) 306-5665.

### ***Priority***

2. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d). All of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

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***Specification***

3. The abstract is acceptable.
4. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed (MPEP 606.01). The title should mention the spring and rubber arrangement.

***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g)

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prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

**7. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 97/13583 in view of GB 2143299.**

WO 97/13583 discloses a centrifugal separator comprising a centrifuge rotor 5; a frame member 7; a bearing member 3; a spindle 1 which carries the centrifuge rotor 5 and which is provided in the frame member 7 by means of the bearing member 3 to be rotatable about an axis of rotation and discloses a support device for a centrifuge substantially as claimed including support members comprising a helical spring element 6 having an axis disposed radially with respect to the axis of rotation of the centrifuge 5; and spring element pretensioning means or adjustable stop members 12 or 13. WO 97/13583 does not disclose the recited rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element. GB 2143299 discloses a composite spring suitable for use in industrial vibration and shock isolators which is deemed to encompass the field of vibration dampening in rotatable members such as centrifuges (Page 1, lines 119-122); the composite spring including a helical spring element 10 wherein various materials such as a rubber material 15 (Page 1, lines 107-111) is formed between adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element as seen in Figure 1. The spring element 10 is embedded in and thus fixedly connected to the rubber material 15. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have provided rubber material

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in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element in the spring elements of WO 97/13583 as disclosed by GB 2143299 for the purposes of (a) eliminating the inherently poor damping properties of a metal coil spring which permit high and low frequency vibration from being transmitted; (b) providing ample support while providing good variable damping properties at both low and high frequencies; (c) to control the transmission of vibration throughout the length of the spring; and (d) to provide support an any system in which high axial and lateral stiffness is required with effective damping and minimum loss of support with age (Page 1, lines 10-20, lines 44-54, and lines 98-121).

With regard to claim 6, the product-by-process limitation in the claim (i.e., the manner in which the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material) does not impart patentability to the claims per MPEP 2113.

**8. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 97/13583 in view of Rushmore (USP 2,230,069).**

WO 97/13583 discloses a centrifugal separator comprising a centrifuge rotor 5; a frame member 7; a bearing member 3; a spindle 1 which carries the centrifuge rotor 5 and which is provided in the frame member 7 by means of the bearing member 3 to be rotatable about an axis of rotation and discloses a support device for a centrifuge substantially as claimed including support members comprising a helical spring element 6 having an axis disposed radially with respect to the axis of rotation of the

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centrifuge 5; and spring element pretensioning means or adjustable stop members 12 or 13. WO 97/13583 does not disclose the recited rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element. Rushmore (USP 2,230,069) discloses a composite spring suitable for use in high speed mechanisms which is deemed to encompass the field of vibration dampening in high speed rotatable members such as centrifuges (Col. 1, lines 1-3) including a helical spring element 1 wherein a rubber material 2 (Col. 1, lines 36-42) is formed between adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element as seen in Figure 4. The spring element 1 is embedded in and thus fixedly connected to the rubber material 2. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have provided rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element in the spring elements of WO 97/13583 as disclosed by Rushmore for the purposes of preventing and/or damping vibrations (Col. 1, lines 36-50 and Col. 2, lines 56-60)

With regard to claim 6, note the patent to Rushmore teaches that the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material by vulcanization (Col. 1, lines 39-42 and Col. 3, lines 6-13), however, the product-by-process limitation in the claim (i.e., the manner in which the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material) does not impart patentability to the claims per MPEP 2113.

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**9. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kopf (USP 2,487,343) in view of GB 2143299.**

Kopf discloses a centrifugal separator comprising a centrifuge rotor (not shown - col. 2, lines 40-43); a frame member 11; a bearing member 19, 19a, 19b; a spindle 10 which carries the centrifuge rotor and which is provided in the frame member 11 by means of the bearing member to be rotatable about an axis of rotation and Kopf also discloses a support device for a centrifuge substantially as claimed including support members comprising a helical spring element 15 having an axis disposed radially with respect to the axis of rotation of the centrifuge; and spring element pretensioning means or adjustable stop members 17. Kopf does not disclose the recited rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element. GB 2143299 discloses a composite spring suitable for use in industrial vibration and shock isolators which is deemed to encompass the field of vibration dampening in rotatable members such as centrifuges (Page 1, lines 119-122); the composite spring including a helical spring including a helical spring element 10 wherein various materials such as a rubber material 15 (Page 1, lines 107-111) is formed between adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element as seen in Figure 1. The spring element 10 is embedded in and thus fixedly connected to the rubber material 15. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have provided rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or



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turns of the spring element in the spring elements of Kopf as disclosed by GB 2143299 for the purposes of (a) eliminating the inherently poor damping properties of a metal coil spring which permit high and low frequency vibration from being transmitted; (b) providing ample support while providing good variable damping properties at both low and high frequencies; (c) to control the transmission of vibration throughout the length of the spring; and (d) to provide support an any system in which high axial and lateral stiffness is required with effective damping and minimum loss of support with age (Page 1, lines 10-20, lines 44-54, and lines 98-121).

With regard to claim 6, the product-by-process limitation in the claim (i.e., the manner in which the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material) does not impart patentability to the claims per MPEP 2113.

**10. Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kopf in view of Rushmore (USP 2,230,069).**

Kopf discloses a centrifugal separator comprising a centrifuge rotor (not shown - col. 2, lines 40-43); a frame member 11; a bearing member 19, 19a, 19b; a spindle 10 which carries the centrifuge rotor and which is provided in the frame member 11 by means of the bearing member to be rotatable about an axis of rotation and Kopf also discloses a support device for a centrifuge substantially as claimed including support members comprising a helical spring element 15 having an axis disposed radially with respect to the axis of rotation of the centrifuge; and spring element pretensioning

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means or adjustable stop members 17. Kopf does not disclose the recited rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element. Rushmore (USP 2,230,069) discloses a composite spring suitable for use in high speed mechanisms which is deemed to encompass the field of vibration dampening in high speed rotatable members such as centrifuges (Col. 1, lines 1-3) including a helical spring element 1 wherein a rubber material 2 (Col. 1, lines 36-42) is formed between adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element as seen in Figure 4. The spring element 1 is embedded in and thus fixedly connected to the rubber material 2. It would have been prima facie obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time applicant's invention was made, to have provided rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring element in the spring elements of Kopf as disclosed by Rushmore for the purposes of preventing and/or damping vibrations (Col. 1, lines 36-50 and Col. 2, lines 56-60)

With regard to claim 6, note the patent to Rushmore teaches that the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material by vulcanization (Col. 1, lines 39-42 and Col. 3, lines 6-13), however, the product-by-process limitation in the claim (i.e., the manner in which the spring material is fixedly connected to the rubber material) does not impart patentability to the claims per MPEP 2113.

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***Response to Amendment***

11. Applicant's arguments filed 01 FEB 2002 have been fully considered but they are not deemed to be persuasive.

It would appear Applicant would have the examiner believe that 35 USC 103(a) does not apply to the prosecution of the instant application. Well, the examiner more fully appreciates the applicability and merit of this statute for applications such as this where the combination of the prior art renders the claimed subject matter blatantly obvious to one skilled in the art.

The examiner is at a loss to imagine any subject matter more obvious than taking a centrifuge with a spring-type support device that has all of the claimed elements with the exception of rubber about the springs and combining it with a reference that clearly teaches providing rubber about the springs under the authority of 35 USC 103(a). There even exists subclass 33 in Class 267 (Spring Devices) which is replete with coil-spring and rubber arrangements for the purpose of damping vibrations.

With regard to GB 2143299, Applicant argues that GB '299 does not "disclose or suggest or include any hint of a centrifugal separator." This argument is wholly irrelevant to at least claims 1-10 since these claims do not include a centrifugal separator within the scope thereof. Applicant narrowly construes the teaches of GB '299 and insists that GB '299 does not include any disclosure of an application similar to one with a centrifuge. So Applicant presumes that the field of centrifugal separation

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has nothing to do with industrial vibration and shock isolation? Such a presumption is nonsensical since the field of centrifugal separation is largely an industrial undertaking and the art is full of patents and disclosures drawn to addressing and mitigating the effects of vibration and shock isolation on the centrifugal separation systems (e.g., simply look through Class 494/subclass 82). Accordingly, GB '299 is clearly and unequivocally relevant and analogous to the claimed and disclosed invention.

Applicant's conclusion that GB '299 is a complicated construction (whatever the metes and bounds of "complicated" purport to be) is not germane to patentability since Applicant (as is customary) has implemented the transitional term "comprising" in the claims. The transitional term "comprising", which is synonymous with "including," "containing," or "characterized by," is inclusive or open - ended and does not exclude additional, unrecited elements or method steps. *Moleculon Research Corp. v. CBS, Inc.*, 793 F.2d 1261, 229 USPQ 805 (Fed. Cir. 1986) *In re Baxter*, 656 F.2d 679, 210 USPQ 795, 803 (CCPA 1981); *Ex parte Davis*, 80 USPQ 448, 450 (Bd. App. 1948)("comprising" leaves "the claim open for the inclusion of unspecified ingredients even in major amounts"). Accordingly, the fact that GB '299 has multiple elements does not preclude the application of the reference to the claims. In any event, GB '299 is not significant for the number of elements it discloses but rather for the clear teaching of providing rubber material in the spaces between the turns of the spring elements.

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Applicant then states that the prior art structure would not be suitable for the conditions which prevail in a centrifuge. Applicant's position on this point is considered to be speculative attorney's argument unsupported by objective technical evidence on the issue. Arguments of counsel cannot take the place of evidence in the record. *In re Schulze*, 346 F.2d 600, 602, 145 USPQ 716, 718 (CCPA 1965); *In re Pearson*, 494 F.2d 1399, 1405, 181 USPQ 641, 646 (CCPA 1974).

With regard to Rushmore, Applicant states that the rubber material in Rushmore is not a continuous tube or rod element. The examiner has found no such limitations of the rubber material in the claims as the claims only require rubber material in the space between the rounds of the wire which is shown by Figs. 3 and 5 of Rushmore. Such arguments are of no patentable consequence because it is well settled that features not claimed may not be relied upon in support of patentability. *In re Self*, 671 F.2d 1344, 213 USPQ 1 (CCPA 1982). Although a claim should be interpreted in light of the specification disclosure, it is generally considered improper to read limitations contained in the specification into the claims. See *In re Prater*, 415 F.2d 1393, 162 USPQ 541 (CCPA 1969) and *In re Winkhaus*, 527 F.2d 637, 188 USPQ 129 (CCPA 1975), which discuss the premise that one cannot rely on the specification to impart limitations to the claim that are not recited in the claim.

Limitations not found in the language of a claim cannot be read into the claim. *E. I. Du Pont de Nemours & Co. v. Phillips Petroleum Co.*, 849 F.2d 1430, 7 USPQ2d

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1129 (Fed. Cir. 1988). Limitations appearing in the patent specification cannot be read into the claims. *Id.* Nor is it permissible to inject into claims limitations referred to in the prosecution history. *Intervet America, Inc. v. Kee-Vet Labs, Inc.*, 887 F.2d 1050, 1053, 12 USPQ2d 1474, (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Nonetheless, the prior art is replete with springs having a continuous matrix of rubber material between adjacent rounds or turns of the helical spring element so it is not seen how such a limitation (if claimed) would define over the prior art.

Applicant's habit of narrowly interpreting the teachings of the prior art arise again with regard to Rushmore as Rushmore' invention relates to rubber coated helical compression springs employed in "high speed mechanisms" with combustion engines being given as an example. Is not a centrifuge of the type disclosed a high speed mechanism? Nonetheless, GB '299 is significant for the clear teaching of providing rubber material in the spaces between the turns of the spring elements employed in high speed machinery.

Since the patent to Kopf and WO 97/13583 disclose similar subject matter, the reasons for asserting that the combination of GB' 299 and Rushmore with Kopf are proper are analogous to the arguments set forth above with respect to the combination of WO 97/13583 and GB '299 and WO 97/13583 and Rushmore.

With respect to Applicant's arguments that the secondary references to GB 2143299 and Rushmore cannot be bodily incorporated into the primary references of

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WO 97/13583 and Kopf, the test for obviousness is not whether the features of the reference may be *bodily incorporated* into the other to produce the claimed subject matter but simply what the references make obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Bozek*, 163 USPQ 545 (CCPA 1969); *In re Richman*, 165 USPQ 509 (CCPA 1970); *In re Beckum*, 169 USPQ 47 (CCPA 1971); *In re Sneed*, 218 USPQ 385. The suggestion to modify the art to produce the claimed invention need not be expressly stated in one or all of the references used to show obviousness and instead may be an implied suggestion. *Cable Electric Products, Inc. v. Genmark, Inc.*, 770 F.2d 1015, 1025, 226 USPQ 881, 886 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Sernaker*, 217 USPQ 1 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Nilssen*, 7 USPQ2d 1500, 1502 (Fed. Cir. 1988). It is not necessary that the references actually suggest, expressly or in so many words, the changes or improvements that applicant has made. Rather, the test for combining references is what the combined teachings of the references as a whole would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Sheckler*, 168 USPQ 716 (CCPA 1971); *In re McLaughlin*, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971); *In re Young*, 159 USPQ 725 (CCPA 1968); *Cable Elec.*, 226 USPQ at 886-87. The motivation to combine can arise from the knowledge that the prior art elements will perform their expected functions to achieve their expected results when combined for their common known purpose. *Miles Lab., Inc. v. Shandon Inc.*, 27 USPQ2d 1123, 1128 (Fed. Cir. 1993). In the instant application, the secondary references to GB 2143299 and Rushmore make obvious or

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suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art the provision of providing rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of a spring element for the beneficial purposes of preventing and/or damping vibrations in the machinery to which the spring elements are coupled.

While there must be some suggestion or motivation for one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of references, it is not necessary that such be found within the four corners of the references themselves; a conclusion of obviousness may be made from common knowledge and common sense of the person of ordinary skill in the art without any hint or suggestion in a particular reference. *In re Bosek*, 416 F.2d 1385, 163 USPQ 545 (CCPA 1969). Further, in an obviousness assessment, skill is presumed on the part of the artisan, rather than the lack thereof. *In re Sovish*, 769 F.2d 738, 226 USPQ 771 (Fed. Cir. 1985).

With respect to the applied references, the examiner has considered all of the disclosure of each reference for what it would have fairly taught one of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Boe*, 355 F.2d 961, 148 USPQ 507 (CCPA 1966). Additionally, the specific teachings of each reference and the inferences which one skilled in the art would have reasonably been expected to draw from the disclosure has been taken into account. *In re Preda*, 401 F.2d 825, 159 USPQ (CCPA 1968). On the basis of the knowledge and level of skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention, as reflected



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by the applied references, the examiner concludes that the rejections under 35 USC 103 are well founded.

Applying the test for obviousness set forth in *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981), which is what the combined teachings of the references would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art, the examiner concludes that one having ordinary skill in the art would have found it prima facie obvious to have provided rubber material in the spaces between the adjacent rounds or turns of the spring elements in WO 97/13583 or Kopf in view of the teachings of GB 2143299 and Rushmore.

With respect to the argument that the prior art must contain something to suggest the desirability of the combination, it is noted that to justify combining reference teachings in support of a rejection under 35 USC 103, it is not necessary that a device shown in one reference be capable of being physically inserted into the device shown in the other or that the prior art suggest expressly the changes or possible improvements the applicant has made. It is only necessary that knowledge clearly present in the prior art was applied. *In re Keller*, supra; *In re Sernaker*, 702 F.2d 989, 217 USPQ 1 (Fed. Cir. 1983). The examiner has applied only knowledge clearly present in the prior art as evidenced by GB 2143299 and Rushmore in the rejections of the pending claims and the rejections are thus proper.

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Since the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been prima facie obvious at the time the invention was made, to a person having ordinary skill in the art, from the combined teachings of the references, the rejections under 35 USC 103(a) are considered proper.

### ***Conclusion***

12. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a).

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE TO THIS FINAL ACTION IS SET TO EXPIRE THREE MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS ACTION. IN THE EVENT A FIRST RESPONSE IS FILED WITHIN TWO MONTHS OF THE MAILING DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION AND THE ADVISORY ACTION IS NOT MAILED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE THREE-MONTH SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD, THEN THE SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD WILL EXPIRE ON THE DATE THE ADVISORY ACTION IS MAILED, AND ANY EXTENSION FEE PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) WILL BE CALCULATED FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THE ADVISORY ACTION. IN NO EVENT WILL THE STATUTORY PERIOD FOR RESPONSE EXPIRE LATER THAN SIX MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF THIS FINAL ACTION. **ANY RESPONSE FILED AFTER THE MAILING DATE OF THIS FINAL REJECTION WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF MPEP 714.12 AND 714.13.**

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Charles Cooley whose telephone number is ☎ (703) 308-0112.

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14. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 1700 receptionist whose telephone number is ☎ (703) 308-0651.

Dated: 10 April 2002



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**Charles Cooley**  
**Primary Examiner**  
**Art Unit 1723**